

Information Services Board Briefing Paper on the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Washington's Interactive Licensing Database Project

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Description: Washington's Interactive Licensing Database Project (WILD) automates the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and improves data management in the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). It uses existing commercial technology to provide WILD terminals for hunting and fishing license dealers, along with collecting license sales and data over the telephone and the Internet. The system enforces licensing rules (e.g., provides checks for multiple purchases and outstanding child support obligations), provides accurate, timely accounting and provides numerous accounting/tracking/management databases (users, harvests, education, and reporting). License sales information is updated daily to support revenue projections reporting.

Users of the system include all license dealers and recreational hunters and fishers. Statewide implementation of the system is a challenge due to the requirement to have retailers across the state sell licenses and to have all data received and stored at a central DFW location. The scope of the project causes the risk to remain slightly above average. Legislative and public visibility of this project is high.

Background: The 1996 Washington State Legislature passed Substitute Senate Bill 6529, which required DFW to report to the 1998 Legislature on a proposal to simplify, consolidate, and modernize the recreational fishing and hunting license program. DFW has identified the following uses of information technology as effective means of addressing the requirements of the bill:

- automating the system for the sale and accounting of licenses;
- reviewing requirements for catch and harvest records;
- evaluating other states point-of-sale systems; and
- reducing paper transactions.

DFW developed the WILD system to meet legislative requirements and business needs of the Department in regard to sales of licenses, budget accounting, and revenue projection.

During its January 27, 1999 meeting, the ISB approved the acquisition plan for the WILD project. At the February 16, 2000 ISB meeting, DFW briefed the ISB on details of its contract negotiations with MCI WorldCom. The Board supported the continuation of the project. The contract was signed by both DFW and MCI WorldCom and approved by the Office of Financial Management. The contract took effect April 3, 2000.

Status: The system is currently in production. Point-of-sale devices have been installed at approximately 500 locations across the state. Telephone sales using live operators have been available since March 1, 2001. Full production of Internet sales became available in mid-July 2001.

Issues: There are a number of additional features that are currently in testing or development. These include restrictions of sales to individuals who have had their licenses revoked or suspended due to past fishing or hunting violations, provision of daily data feeds to DFW for reporting purposes, certain elements of performance reporting, and others.

Additional work is underway to improve system performance and the functionality of some of the existing application to improve customer service and fund accountability.

Recommendation: WILD is in production and remaining issues will be resolved by DFW and MCI WorldCom: therefore, DIS recommends that ISB oversight be terminated. DFW will still be expected to complete a Post Implementation Review.